



Issue #3, Volume 6

The Commonwealth's Guardian

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About 300 personnel on state active duty

On page 2: 183rd RTI earns top accreditation

Va. Guard assists with winter storm response

Virginia National Guard Soldiers provided a variety of assistance Feb. 12-13, 2014, after heavy snow created hazardous road conditions across the commonwealth. Operating from readiness centers along the I-81, I-95, Route 29 and Route 460 corridors, Soldiers working in coordination with the Virginia State Police conducted more than 40 missions assisting and transporting local fire, police and emergency medical services personnel and nearly 30 missions assisting stranded motorists and citizens as well as numerous route assessment patrols to determine road trafficability and provide situational awareness in their area of operations.

More than 200 Virginia National Guard personnel were staged at readiness centers across Virginia and ready to support state and local emergency response organizations by early afternoon on Feb. 12. An additional 50 Soldiers, Airmen and members of the Virginia Defense Force are on duty at the Joint Operations Center in Sandston and Logistics Operation Center at Fort Pickett.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/02/14/4953/>



Va. Guard Soldiers from the Fredericksburg-based 116th Brigade Special Troops Battalion assist a motorist stuck in the snow Feb. 13, 2014.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

29th ID Soldiers travel to Germany to help train up next KFOR rotation

Approximately 30 Maryland and Virginia National Guard Soldiers from the Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division conducted a three-week mission Jan. 12 to Feb. 2, 2014, at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/02/06/4905/>

Va. Guard MEDEVAC trains with first responders

For Soldiers assigned to one of the Virginia Army National Guard's newest units, the Chesterfield-based Detachment 2, Company G, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment, Feb. 8, 2014, included helicopters, ambulance rides and a visit to the trauma center at the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/02/11/4929/>

OCS Class 57 begins at Fort Pickett

The first phase of becoming a commissioned officer in the Virginia Army National Guard began Jan. 24-26, 2014, for 33 new officer candidates with the Zero Phase for Class 57 at the Guard's Officer Candidate School.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/02/09/4923/>

116th IBCT Soldiers train on new unmanned aerial system aircraft

Soldiers of the Bowling Green-based Detachment 1, Company B, 116th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team trained at Webster Field, Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., Jan. 31- Feb. 2, 2014.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/02/07/4918/>

Mark Your Calendars!

Feb. 24 - Mar. 1: Military Saves Week

Military Saves Week is an annual opportunity to promote good savings behavior and a chance for Service members and their families to assess their own saving status. Sign up to take the Saver pledge and get your FREE myFICO credit score.

To promote this campaign, the JFSAP Personal Financial Counselor can sign Service members up on site. Get in touch with your PFC to find out how to have her come out to drill so your units can take advantage of this opportunity.

For more info, contact Beth Vallejo, MFLC Personal Financial Counselor at (804) 236-7867 or bvallejo@mflc.zeiders.com.

Visit <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/> for the latest news about the Virginia National Guard

183rd RTI named "Institute of Excellence"

The Virginia National Guard's Fort Pickett-based 183rd Regiment, Regional Training Institute has been declared an "Institute of Excellence" following an accreditation process conducted by U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. The schoolhouse earned an overall score of 98 percent, marking it as one of the best U.S. Army learning centers in the nation.

"HQ TRADOC recognizes the dedication and hard work of all personnel committed to ensuring the 183rd Regiment RTI received 'Institute of Excellence' status, and this achievement demonstrates your commitment to meet the competency needs of today's Army and total force," wrote Gen. Robert W. Cone, commanding general of Training and Doctrine Command, in the notification letter dated Jan. 23, 2014.

"Achieving an "Institute of Excellence" rating means we have exceeded the TRADOC and proponent standards for training facilities and training delivery," explained Lt. Col. Jimmy Kilbourne, 183rd RTI deputy commander. "It also tells other states' training managers that the Virginia RTI is a great place to send their Soldiers who need the type of training we provide."

The accreditation ensures the institution evaluated has the necessary organizational structure, programs and resources to conduct training, the quality and standardization of that training, and that the training meets the needs of the operation force by being current and relevant to operations in a contemporary operation environments while preparing Soldiers for the future.

The 183rd began preparing for the accreditation more than a year in advance.

"We understood from the beginning of the process that achieving the "Institute of Excellence" level of accreditation would be a discriminating factor in maintaining future mission sets, student throughput, staffing levels and funding," said Col. Doug Messner, commander of the 183rd RTI. "Therefore, we began the process early developing a plan 18 months out."

Staff members researched the standards set by TRADOC, conducted site visits to other RTIs to observe the accreditation process and each of the battalions submitted self-assessments. Accreditation teams then conducted several visits to the 183rd RTI, each lasting three to four days and including an in-brief, a review of each standard, student and instructor interviews, facilities inspections and commander leader interviews.

Virginia's RTI is comprised of the RTI Headquarters and three battalions. First Battalion conducts infantry training, including the infantryman military occupational specialty qualification course, Light Leaders Course and rappel master, while 2nd Battalion conducts the 88M Motor Transport Operator Course. Third battalion includes both Officer Candidate School and Warrant Officer Candidate School and also trains Soldiers as military police officers.

"This accreditation cycle marked the first time that the 183rd RTI was evaluated as a Regimental entity," explained Messner. "Past accreditations focused on the individual battalion, and while that same level of scrutiny was applied to each battalion, [this



Infantrymen enrolled in the Fort Pickett-based 183rd Regiment, Regional Training Institute's Light Leaders Course conduct their final training exercise June 25, 2013.

time] there was the added dimension of regimental coordination and support."

Different standards are applied to various parts of the RTI, and include a look at the facilities and environment of the schoolhouse, the mission and functions, training resource management, safety, the effectiveness of the staff and faculty, staff development and training support.

All three of the battalions earned high marks, with 1st and 3rd Battalions earning 100 percent ratings and 2nd Battalion earning a score of 97 percent.

"While this seems like a long and arduous process, the RTI staff, instructors, officers and NCOs, take tremendous pride in their level of professionalism and ability to excel," Messner said.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/02/03/4740/>

MORE ON THE WEB

Photos: SPS and AG visit troops serving on state active duty

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157640960759335/>

Photos: Va. Guard responds to winter storm conditions

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157640910117263/>

Photos: Va. Guard personnel staged and ready

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157640902899885/>

Photos: 1945th Contingency Contracting Team departs for Afghanistan deployment

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157640781078775/>

Photos: Va. Guard personnel return home from West Virginia water sampling mission

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157640335412983/>

Virginia National Guard Family Assistance Centers

<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/fac/>

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